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LETTER DATED 1 AUGUST 1994 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In my letter of 19 June 1994 (S/1994/728), I had informed the members of the Security Council about the tragic situation in Rwanda, about the need for an urgent and coordinated response by the international community to the genocide which had engulfed that country as well as about the efforts made by the Secretariat to obtain the necessary troops, together with the required equipment, to enable the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) to implement the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council.

Since that letter, the tragedy of Rwanda has been further compounded by the rapidly deteriorating events which have culminated in the catastrophic humanitarian crisis of the Rwandese refugees in Zaire with which the international community is trying its best to grapple. The members of the Security Council have been kept informed, on a daily basis, of the status of reinforcing UNAMIR up to the strength of 5,500 troops authorized by the Council in its resolution 918 (1994) of 17 May 1994. The simple and most regrettable truth is that, even though two and a half months have elapsed since the adoption of resolution 918 (1994), UNAMIR is as far from attaining the authorized troop strength as it was at the time of the adoption of the resolution. This position obtains even though the Council, in its resolutions 925 (1994) and 929 (1994), has urged Governments to respond urgently to my request for resources for UNAMIR.

While several Governments have responded positively, their offers have been conditional and, consequently, have entailed complicated efforts to match troops from one country with equipment from another, involving prolonged and complicated negotiations. The result has been that, as on 25 July, less than 500 were on the ground, apart from a number of military observers. The slow bureaucratic processes within the Secretariat have been partly responsible for these regrettable delays - and I already am engaged in an effort to rectify them - but the major cause has been the reluctance of Governments possessing the required resources to make them available to the United Nations.

It is fully understandable that the appalling events in Rwanda, where over two months of genocidal massacres occurred concomitantly with a civil war following the breakdown of the Arusha peace process on 6 April 1994, constituted a strong disincentive against involvement. At the same time, it must be

recognized that such hesitations and the consequent delays have contributed to the catastrophe which we now countenance.

In this context, I should like to express my appreciation to those Governments who allowed their troops or observers to remain in UNAMIR for varying periods after its reduction as decided by the Council in its resolution 912 (1994) of 21 April. I especially commend the Governments of Ghana, which maintained half a battalion during this phase, and of Canada which provided the only air-bridge into Kigali even when the airport remained under fire.

Over the last two and a half months, DPKO has presented revised lists of requirements to Governments on various occasions, the first time on 12 May. These requirements were reiterated in five meetings with troop contributors between 19 May and 25 July. These efforts have brought the following offers:

Troops

Ghana -
800 (520 in Rwanda, the rest awaiting equipment)

Ethiopia -
800 (well-equipped, deployment imminent)

Zambia -
800 (awaiting equipment)

Zimbabwe -
800 (awaiting equipment)

Tunisia -
600 (partially equipped, awaiting remaining equipment)

Nigeria -
300 (being prepared for deployment)

Mali -
200 (awaiting equipment)

Malawi -
120 (awaiting equipment)

SUBTOTAL: 4,420

Specialized units

Canada -
440 (415 for communications unit and 25 for airport control, deployment in progress)

United Kingdom -
600 (engineers, logistics and medical, deployment imminent)

Australia -
300 (medical unit with infantry element, deployment imminent)

Mali -
40 medical personnel (to be confirmed)

SUBTOTAL: 1,340

TOTAL TROOPS OFFERED: 5,760

Equipment

Belgium -
range of equipment (for the Malawi contingent)

Canada -
one C-130 aircraft

France -
20 fuel/water trucks and some equipment from "Operation Turquoise"

Italy -
one C-130 aircraft and 20 trucks

Netherlands -
one Fokker 27 aircraft, 50 trucks, 25 jeeps, 15 generators and 10 kitchen trailers

New Zealand -
100 trucks

South Africa -
50 lightly armoured reconnaissance vehicles

United Kingdom -
50 trucks

United States -
50 armoured personnel carriers (refitted in Uganda for the Ghana battalion)

In an effort to accelerate deployment, DPKO suggested that equipment-contributing countries bilaterally "adopt" units from another country requiring equipment. This approach has been accepted by a few Governments, while others maintain their preference to make the equipment offers to the United Nations, which then has the time-consuming task of distributing these offers to countries offering troops, whose requirements often are not fulfilled by the equipment offered by other countries. In many cases the equipment offered was in poor condition requiring reconditioning and thus additional weeks of delay. A major complicating factor has been the inordinate time required to negotiate the offers of equipment from some countries, since the offers are subject to payment by the United Nations. Finalizing the terms of contract, terms of payment, lead-times for delivery, training and other problems involving legal details and

accounting procedures have prolonged the process for many weeks, while UNAMIR tried to cope with the deteriorating situation in Rwanda with the meagre resources at its disposal.

While all efforts at the moment are concentrated on dealing with the dreadful humanitarian situation in the refugee camps in Zaire, Tanzania, Burundi and Uganda, the need for reinforcements for UNAMIR remains urgent. One of its principal tasks is to establish conditions of safety and security to encourage the refugees to return. After their return, UNAMIR will be responsible for ensuring stability in the country, especially along the north-western border with Zaire, where disturbed conditions cannot be ruled out. Instability must also be contained in the south-west zone from where the French force will withdraw in three weeks. I reiterate my urgent request in the strongest terms to Governments to provide the essential reinforcements for UNAMIR. Those Governments who have fully equipped units at their disposal might make them available temporarily until contingents that have been offered are properly equipped and are deployed in Rwanda. It is my hope that UNAMIR will be able to cope with the changed situation in Rwanda with its authorized troop level, but the possible need for additional resources cannot be ruled out. However, my intention would be to reduce the troop level as and when circumstances permit.

I am fully conscious of the tremendous burdens that the international community has been called upon to bear in coping simultaneously with so many demanding, and often dangerous, situations in different parts of the world. I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to all those numerous countries, from all continents, who have made enormous contributions to these noble endeavours of the United Nations. I feel, however, that I must continue to urge all Governments not to slacken in their efforts. Rwanda needs the help of the international community and will continue to need it for the foreseeable future. I am convinced that resources do exist. What is required is the political will in the countries around the world coalescing into a collective political will at the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would bring these observations to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI